TECH SAGE TECH TALK

"Insider Tips To Make Your Business Run Faster, Easier, And More Profitably"

"As a business owner, you don't have time to waste on technical and operational issues. That's where we *shine*! Call us and put an end to your IT problems finally and forever!"

John Hill,
TechSage Solutions

Inside This Issue ...

How To Determine The TRUE Cost Of Any IT Upgrade, Transition Or Addition

I'm often asked about the ROI (return on investment) for technology. Truth is, I don't believe you "invest" in technology. Investments are things that provide a measurable, quantifiable return for your money.

Of course it can easily be argued that technology *does* provide a return for your money. If you don't think so, try communicating with your clients and market without e-mail or tracking inventory with pen and paper. And the right technology applied with a smart strategy can certainly give any business owner a strategic advantage in faster delivery of goods and services to customers, greater productivity, lowered production costs and the like. In fact, there aren't too many businesses that can operate without a few core IT applications. But the reality is that your bank account is going to be a bit lighter after you install that new upgrade or technology, so how do you know if that IT upgrade or project is worth the money?

The right way to look at the true price of any IT project or upgrade is to look at TCO or "total cost of ownership" and not just the PRICE of the project or upgrade. For example, if you buy a car, the price of the car is only one cost of owning it. You also have to consider insurance, gas and routine maintenance like new tires and oil changes to get an accurate look at what you'll pay. Therefore, the total COST of owning a car is far more than just the price tag – and a cheaper car up front can end up costing more in the long-haul if frequent repairs are needed.

In IT, the same principle applies. You have to look at the TOTAL cost of a particular IT decision, not just the price tag, when comparing options. For example, the real cost of not upgrading a network may actually be higher than spending several thousand dollars on new equipment and upgrades when you accurately assess the total cost of maintenance, service fees and poor performance. These days, many business owners are looking at "going to the cloud" because they want to save money. And in many cases, it will do just that, but the cost savings will often come in the form of cheaper devices, less maintenance and low (or no) upgrade costs over a 3 year period – not in a month to month service fee. So before you say "No" or "Yes" to that next IT project, make sure you are taking into consideration the TOTAL cost of your decision, and make sure you are talking to a true pro who understands the difference between the price of something and the total cost.

Get More Information about our Services At: **www.techsagesolutions.com**

COMPUTRACE®
LO/JACK®
FOR LAPTOPS

Since we talked about "who pays" (employees or employers) when a device goes missing in last month's newsletter, we thought we would recommend a good device tracking system for laptops this month.

The company that provides LoJack for Laptops, Absolute Software, is NOT the same company that provides the vehicle recovery service you're most likely familiar with (they license the name). But they do provide a similar service in the sense that they help businesses and consumers track, manage, secure and recover mobile computers and devices.

Once installed, LoJack for Laptops will allow you to geographically locate your lost or stolen laptop. It also allows you to issue a remote command to freeze your lost or stolen computer and/or create a customized message to display on your computer's screen to help someone who finds it return it to you. If you feel like it's fallen into the wrong hands, you can remotely erase files on your computer. You can opt to delete all of your files, or just certain file types. The next time your laptop contacts the Monitoring Center, it receives the "delete" command and erases the files you selected.

The Pros And Cons Of Switching To...

Since Alexander Graham Bell made the first phone call to his assistant Watson, the phone has come a long way. And now thanks to Internet technology, it's possible to make phone calls over the Internet using VoIP technology or voice over Internet Protocol (IP).

While there are a number of advantages to a VoIP system over a standard phone system, the biggest reason companies switch is to save money. It's not uncommon for a company making a lot of long distance calls to save 50% or more on their phone bill. Of course, there's no guarantee of this since there are a lot of different VoIP systems and the amount of money that you will save really just depends on which system you buy – and in some cases, no savings will make up for poor sound quality or dropped calls. So what are the pros and cons?

The upside is that most business class VoIP systems will offer you the same features you're used to with your current phone system, including call forwarding, call waiting, conferencing, voice mail, and (depending on what your current phone system is) additional features like the ability to share data, applications and even transmit video in addition to voice so that you can see and hear the person that you are talking to.

Of course, there are some downsides you need to consider before jumping on the VoIP bandwagon. The biggest problem with VoIP systems is the sound quality. In some cases, it's a bandwidth issue that will cause problems, but it's not the only one. Since the voice data is being broken up into a series of packets and transmitted over the Internet, there could be moments of silence, broken voice patterns, echoes, delays and static sounds. Sound quality is the #1 complaint most VoIP users have about the service.

Another issue is that VoIP systems cannot be used if there is a power or Internet outage. A traditional phone can function during a power outage because the phone company transmits electricity over the phone line. This electricity is used to power the phone (cordless phones being the exception). That way, even if the power goes out, the phone will usually still work because the phone's power is coming from a different source.

Our TechSage Cloud Communications Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) Solution is available now. **Call us now** and ask for our Pros and Cons analysis to find out if your communications should be in the cloud! **(210) 582-5814. Call today!**

What Is Google+ And How Will It Affect Your Company's SEO?

Not too long ago Google introduced Google+ in an effort to take on Facebook and Twitter in the social networking war – and given the fact that over 20 million people have already started using this feature since it was introduced last June, there's a good chance it will continue to gain ground and popularity among web users. But what is Google+ and how will it affect the ranking of your company's web site – if at all?

Google is attempting to combine the most popular features of Facebook and Twitter into a centralized social hub where users have the ability to share content with specific groups of people called "circles." As users build these circles, they'll be able to see web sites that members of their circles have +1'd (is that a verb?). There's also a group video chat feature called "Hangouts," and a user-defined topical news feed similar to Twitter's hashtag called "Sparks." While positive (or even negative) reviews from users online have always been viewed through the lens of skepticism, Google+ will add a level of validation to those reviews since you only see the +1's from people in your circles.

While it's still too early to tell how Google+ will affect your company's SEO, it's safe to assume that Google will reward web sites that get lots of +1s because of the web's evolution to become more "social" and user driven.

The bottom line to all of this (and a key ingredient to any company's success online OR offline) is good old fashioned customer service. These days it's easy for any disgruntled customer to post a negative comment online. And once it's posted, it's practically written in indelible ink. Get enough negative reviews and your reputation will definitely take a hit. Additionally, it's important that you monitor your company's reputation online and encourage happy clients to post positive comments about you.

Does Your Inbox Sometimes Look Like This?

bounce-1131_html-938985-193974-1060900-0@bounce.s4.exacttarget.com	ehill@techsagesolutions.com	Call Center Sale Conversions Made Easy
mail208@em-sm5-128.mktroute.com	ehill@techsagesolutions.com	Rapid Data Recovery with SmartStyle Offi...
info@rancrew.info	elizabeth.hill@cfcti.com	Retrain your dog how to walk
leadership_development@bizemailnetwork16.com	ehill@techsagesolutions.com	How to Supervise People
info@ranmage.info	elizabeth.hill@cfcti.com	Triple Care Dental Spray for Dogs and Ca ...
info@ranmage.info	elizabeth.hill@cfcti.com	Two complete sets for the price of one
12612663778.1409865@e2ma.net	ehill@techsagesolutions.com	20 Bucks to Spend on Edible Art!

This is my actual snip it of my spam filter protecting me from what my Inbox could become. How much time do you spend deleting spam so you start work?

Are Your Employees Using Their Personal Devices To Work?

Be Careful!

It's only natural that employees will want to check e-mail and do other work-related activities from home or on the road, often using their own personal devices. But be careful! You could be opening up a serious security loophole by allowing this.

Since these personal devices aren't company owned and regulated, you have limited access and control over how they are used. Employees can easily download malware and viruses and infect your network when they connect, send e-mails or transfer files. Another risk is the security of the device. If an employee loses or misplaces a device with confidential client information on it, it puts a responsibility on YOU to notify clients and can lead to a costly PR nightmare or security breach.

That's not to say you shouldn't allow employees to use personal devices – but if you do, then you need to make sure these devices are being secured and backed up like every other device in your network. The type of remote security monitoring you need will depend on the device, the information being stored or accessed and the laws regarding the information you store for patients or clients.

If you are interested in knowing more about developing a concrete and effective IT security policy for personal device use as well as general system access, please don't hesitate to give us a call so we can sit down with you and discuss a custom security blueprint that's just right for you.

Success Is a Result of Achievement Not Good Intentions

At the beginning of every year many people make a New Year's Resolution List: lose weight, stop smoking, exercise more, learn a second language, lower their cholesterol, spend more time with their family, etc., etc., etc. Making a list is a great idea because "How do you know you got there, if you don't know where you are going?" Unfortunately most people never accomplish anything on their list. Why?

There can be many reasons why people fail at achieving their New Year's Resolutions: lack of commitment and resolve, poor planning, poor organization, lack of time or poor time management, letting trivial things interfere, choosing too many resolutions, depending on others to help, family demands. With all the surprises and demands that pop-up in our daily lives, "New Resolutions" start getting pushed further and further back until they just disappear.

This year I have decided to simplify this process in hopes of helping to ensure my success. I have decided to choose only "One" goal in each of "Four" important areas of my life. Areas you may want to consider are family, health, business, leisure, financial and personal. The key here is to limit your areas, because the more you pick, the greater your chance for failure. It is better to pick one and achieve it than it is to choose five and fail. When you concentrate your focus on just one goal, many other positive things can occur. A simple example would be to decide you are going to exercise more. Exercise will improve your health and your appearance, give you more energy, slow the aging process, cause you to sleep better, and reduce illness…One goal = many results. My suggestion for you this year is to Simplify (1 goal), Decide (4 areas) and Abide (Do). Success is a result of achievement, not good intentions.

Guest article provided by:
Robert Stevenson is a highly sought after, internationally known speaker. He is the author of the best-selling books "How to Soar Like An Eagle in a World Full of Turkeys" and "52 Essential Habits For Success." Robert is a graduate of the Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech) and is a former All-American Athlete. He started his first business at 24 and has owned several companies. Robert has international sales experience dealing in over 20 countries and his client list reads like a Who's Who in Business. He has shared the podium with such renowned names as Generals Colin Powell and Norman Schwarzkopf, Former President George H.W. Bush, Anthony Robbins and Steven Covey. www.robertstevenson.org/

FREE BUSINESS ADVISORY GUIDE

12 Little-Known Facts Every Business Owner Must Know About Data Backup, Security and Disaster Recovery

If you are a business owner relying on tape drives, external hard drives or USB devices to backup your data, then it's critical for you to get and read this informative white paper. You'll learn what most IT consultants don't know or won't tell you about making sure your company's critical data is safe from loss, corruption, cyber criminals, natural disasters and employee sabotage.

FREE REPORT:
"12 Little-Known Facts Every Business Owner Must Know About Data Backup, Security And Disaster Recovery"

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